

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Academic Year 2025-2026

<b>Policy owner</b>	Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>Policy year</b>	2025-2026
<b>Applies to</b>	All students, staff, leaders, trustees, volunteers, contractors and visitors	<b>Status</b>	Approval Version
<b>Approval body</b>	Board of Trustees	<b>Implementation</b>	Effective upon final Board signature
<b>Review cycle</b>	Annual and as required by law, KHDA or safeguarding risk	<b>Next review</b>	No later than June 2027
<b>Related policies</b>	Staff Code of Conduct; Safer Recruitment; Staff Disciplinary; Behaviour; Anti-Bullying; Online Safety; Trips and Events; Inclusion; Health and Safety	<b>Confidentiality</b>	Public policy with confidential case records
<b>Version control</b>	Clean implementation draft aligned to UAE/KHDA requirements	<b>Evidence owner</b>	DSL / HR / Board DST

## Vision

Our vision is for all young people to experience that learning has lasting value beyond their life at school.

## Mission





Our mission is to know the needs of every student, collaboratively creating a student-centered, sustainable 21st century learning environment that fosters leadership, social cohesion, creativity, responsibility and ambition, providing a catalyst for abilities of lasting relevance to emerge.

## Policy Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and earlier where required due to changes in UAE Federal Law, Dubai Government requirements, KHDA guidance, DSIB inspection expectations, safeguarding risk, school structure, or Board of Trustees direction.

This policy is subject to changes in accordance with Federal and Local Government laws, KHDA guidelines and protocols, and Ignite School governance procedures.

The Board of Trustees, Director and school leadership are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented with immediate effect once approved and that appropriate evidence is retained for KHDA, DSIB, accreditation and internal governance review.

Approver	Role / authority	Signature	Date
Wedad Saada	Director / Lead DSL	 <small>Wedad Saada (Jun 28, 2026 15:48:25 GMT+4)</small>	06/28/2026
Colin Donovan	Pre-KG/ES Principal / Deputy DSL	 <small>Colin Donovan (Jun 28, 2026 16:00:00 GMT+4)</small>	06/28/2026
Asif Padela	MS/HS Principal / Deputy DSL	 <small>Asif Padela (Jun 28, 2026 16:00:00 GMT+4)</small>	06/28/2026
Board of Trustees	Governance approval	 <small>Jason Kirwin (Jun 28, 2026 13:58:30 GMT+4)</small>	06/28/2026

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose of Child Protection

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health and development; ensuring that children grow up in the provision of safe and effective care; and acting to enable all children to have the best life chances.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy forms part of the suite of Ignite School documents and procedures that relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. It sets out how Ignite School protects children, responds to welfare concerns, supports students at risk, and ensures that adults working with or around children understand their duties.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers, contractors, leaders and trustees with clear guidance to keep children safe and secure at Ignite School, and to inform parents and guardians how the school safeguards their children while they are in our care.

- All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- School staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have regular contact with children.
- All staff must act in the best interests of the child and must report concerns without delay through the school safeguarding reporting process.
- Temporary staff, volunteers, contractors and external providers must be made aware of the safeguarding policies and reporting procedures before working with or around students.
- The school will maintain a culture in which safeguarding is visible, understood, recorded, challenged and continuously reviewed.

## 2. Policy Mission Statement

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern. Children have this right and cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure.
- Ensure students know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or unsafe.
- Ensure staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and about the conduct of adults working with or around children.
- Ensure that concerns are acted upon promptly, recorded accurately, escalated appropriately, and reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead structure.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff, volunteers, contractors or leaders are dealt with in accordance with UAE law, KHDA expectations, school safeguarding procedures and staff disciplinary procedures.
- Establish and maintain safe recruitment, staff screening, induction, training, staff acknowledgement and HR compliance processes.
- Maintain age-appropriate safeguarding education, student wellbeing systems, pastoral care and inclusion support that enable students to understand personal safety and how to seek help.

## 3. Scope and Principles

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Ignite School and to all adults who work with or may come into contact with students, including employees, leaders, trustees, volunteers, interns, contractors, outsourced staff, visiting specialists, activity providers, transport personnel, clinic staff and visitors.

The following principles guide all safeguarding decisions and actions at Ignite School:

- The best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all safeguarding decisions.
- Every child has the right to life, safety, dignity, education, protection, privacy and appropriate care.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- Concerns must be reported promptly even where evidence is incomplete. Staff must not investigate concerns themselves.
- Confidentiality must be maintained on a strict need-to-know basis, but confidentiality must never prevent action required to protect a child.
- The child's voice, wishes and feelings must be listened to, recorded and considered in a manner appropriate to age, maturity, communication needs and safety.
- No form of corporal punishment, degrading treatment, intimidation, humiliation, verbal abuse, physical violence or emotional harm is permitted.
- Safeguarding applies equally in school, during school activities, on school transport, during trips and events, online, and during distance or blended learning where applicable.
- The school encourages reporting of low-level concerns regarding adult conduct that may be inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, even where the behavior does not meet the threshold for a formal safeguarding allegation.

## 4. Implementation, Monitoring and Review of Safeguarding

This policy will be implemented through staff induction, safeguarding training, staff acknowledgements, DSL reporting procedures, student wellbeing systems, safer recruitment arrangements, leadership oversight, Board assurance, and regular monitoring of safeguarding evidence.

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead structure, Senior Leadership Team, Human Resources and the Board of Trustees. Evidence will include training records, induction records, signed acknowledgements, Code of Conduct confirmations, safer recruitment files, incident and concern records, referral records, case review notes, policy review logs, and Board assurance reporting.

The policy will be reviewed annually by school leadership and the Board of Trustees. Additional review will take place following any significant safeguarding incident, regulatory visit, inspection finding, change in law or guidance, change in school structure, Board direction, or identified risk trend.

## 5. UAE/KHDA Statutory and Regulatory Framework

Ignite School will follow applicable UAE law, Dubai Government requirements, KHDA requirements, DSIB inspection expectations and school governance procedures. The key safeguarding framework documents and regulatory references include, as updated from time to time:

- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 concerning Child Rights, known as Wadeema Law, including the child's right to life, safety, protection, education, privacy, dignity and non-discrimination.
- Cabinet Resolution No. 52 of 2018 concerning the Executive Regulation of Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 concerning Child Rights.
- Federal Decree by Law No. 26 of 2025 Regarding Child Digital Safety, where relevant to online safety, harmful digital content, digital platforms, child privacy, responsible technology use and safeguarding in the digital environment.
- The UAE National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions and Ministerial Resolution No. 659 of 2020 on child protection in educational institutions.
- The UAE Code of Conduct for Education Professionals and relevant UAE professional ethics requirements for school employees.
- KHDA legislation, circulars, guidance and protocols applicable to private schools in Dubai.
- KHDA Technical Guide for Appointing Teaching Staff in Private Schools, including safer recruitment, good standing, due diligence, Code of Conduct and mandatory induction training requirements.
- KHDA Technical Guide on the Deregistration of Educational Staff, including the handling of serious misconduct, safeguarding concerns, disciplinary investigations and reporting expectations.
- KHDA Governance Guide, The Gift of Good Governance - A Guide for the Private Schools Community in Dubai.
- KHDA / DSIB self-evaluation, improvement planning and inspection expectations relating to the protection, care, guidance and support of students.
- KHDA parent guidance, responsibilities of schools guidance, and KHDA guidelines for school trips and events where relevant to student safety and supervision.
- Any applicable requirements of Dubai Police, the Ministry of Education Child Protection Unit, Community Development Authority, Dubai Health Authority, civil defence or other competent UAE/Dubai authorities.

In accordance with the UAE child protection framework, any adult entrusted with the protection, care or education of a child must report concerns that may threaten the child's safety or physical, psychological, moral or mental health. Ignite School will support reporting, protect confidentiality, and maintain secure safeguarding records.

The school will maintain procedures to respond to situations in which a child may have been abused, neglected, exploited or placed at risk, and to situations in which a member of staff, volunteer, contractor, leader or adult associated with the school has behaved in a way that has harmed, may have harmed, or may pose a risk of harm to a child.

## 6. Building Awareness and Prevention

Ignite School will use a range of age-appropriate programmes, pastoral systems and wellbeing strategies to raise awareness of child protection, safeguarding, positive behaviour, respectful relationships, online safety and student wellbeing.

- The school will support students to understand emotions, self-regulation, empathy, assertive communication, responsible decision-making and help-seeking behaviours.
- The school will provide age-appropriate education on bullying prevention, online safety, personal safety, peer relationships, consent within appropriate UAE cultural and legal expectations, respectful communication and trusted adult support.
- The school will promote student wellbeing, positive education, social-emotional learning and pastoral care as part of its safeguarding prevention framework.
- Staff are encouraged to broaden professional learning in wellbeing, positive education, inclusion, digital safety, pastoral care and safeguarding prevention.
- The school will participate in KHDA wellbeing and positive education initiatives where relevant and appropriate.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities on Child Protection and Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All adults working with or around students must maintain professional vigilance and act in the best interests of the child.

Ignite School will identify appropriate senior members of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. These staff must have the authority, time, status and access to resources required to carry out the duties of the role, including supporting staff, escalating concerns, liaising with authorities and maintaining safeguarding records.

### 7.1 All Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and Visitors

- Read, understand and comply with this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding reporting procedures.
- Complete required safeguarding induction and refresher training.
- Report any concern about a child immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL.
- Never investigate concerns independently, ask leading questions, promise confidentiality or delay reporting.

- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid any conduct that may compromise the safety, dignity or wellbeing of students.
- Record concerns factually, accurately and promptly using the school safeguarding concern process.
- Maintain confidentiality on a strict need-to-know basis.

## 7.2 School Leadership Team

- Ensure safeguarding procedures are embedded in day-to-day school practice and that staff know how to report concerns.
- Support timely safeguarding reporting, intervention, escalation and case review.
- Ensure student supervision, behaviour systems, wellbeing systems, inclusion support and incident procedures support safeguarding.
- Ensure that staff understand professional boundaries, safe communication and child-safe conduct expectations.
- Promote a culture where staff are confident to report and challenge safeguarding concerns, including concerns involving senior leaders or governance representatives.

## 7.3 Human Resources

- Maintain safer recruitment and staff compliance evidence, including appointment, screening, induction, training, Code of Conduct and acknowledgement records.
- Ensure new staff receive safeguarding induction and acknowledge receipt of key safeguarding documents before or at the start of employment.
- Maintain a safeguarding training matrix and provide evidence to leadership, the Board of Trustees, KHDA, DSIB and other relevant authorities when required.
- Ensure teacher and leader appointment processes are aligned with KHDA requirements, including due diligence, police clearances, good standing requirements and signed Code of Conduct expectations where applicable.
- Support the management of allegations involving staff in line with safeguarding, disciplinary and KHDA deregistration expectations, without compromising confidentiality or child protection action.

## 7.4 Parents and Guardians

- Support the school in maintaining a safe, respectful and protective environment for children.
- Report safeguarding, bullying, welfare or online safety concerns to the school promptly.
- Respect the confidentiality and dignity of children, families and staff involved in safeguarding matters.
- Work with the school and relevant authorities where support, early help or protection measures are required.

## 8. Designated Safeguarding Lead Framework

During term time, a member of the Designated Safeguarding Lead structure will be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Out-of-hours and school holiday arrangements will be communicated to staff where relevant.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead structure for Ignite School includes the Director, Principals and identified Deputy DSLs / safeguarding team members. Names, roles and contact details will be confirmed annually, circulated to staff, displayed appropriately in school, included in staff induction materials and retained by Human Resources.

### 8.1 Core DSL Responsibilities

- Receive, review and triage safeguarding concerns and disclosures.
- Make decisions about internal support, escalation, external referral and emergency action where required.
- Refer or support the referral of suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation or risk of harm to the relevant UAE/Dubai authority or emergency service as appropriate.
- Liaise with the Director, Principal, School Counsellor, Inclusion Team, Nurse, HR, parents and relevant authorities, as appropriate and only on a need-to-know basis.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff on child protection and safeguarding matters.
- Maintain detailed, accurate and secure safeguarding records.
- Monitor safeguarding trends and provide anonymised safeguarding information to leadership and the Board of Trustees without compromising confidentiality.
- Ensure students at risk are supported through appropriate safety, pastoral, counselling, inclusion or attendance interventions.
- The Lead DSL will provide an annual anonymized safeguarding report to the Board summarizing safeguarding trends, referrals, training compliance and improvement actions.

### 8.2 Safeguarding Team Register

Role	Current holder / position	Safeguarding responsibility	Training level
Lead DSL	Wedad Saada - Director	Strategic safeguarding leadership; external escalation; Board reporting	DSL Level 3
Deputy DSL	Colin Donovan - Pre-KG/ES Principal	Phase safeguarding oversight; case review; staff support	DSL Level 3
Deputy DSL	Asif Padela - MS/HS Principal	Phase safeguarding oversight; case review; staff support	DSL Level 3
Safeguarding Team	Vice Principals, Deans, Counsellors, Clinic and Inclusion Leads as assigned	Early identification, student support, reporting and follow-up	SLT: DSL Level 3 Key staff: Advanced Safeguarding Level 2

Role	Current holder / position	Safeguarding responsibility	Training level
Board DST	Board-appointed Designated Safeguarding Trustee	Governance assurance, challenge and safeguarding oversight	DSL Level 3

The Director will ensure the live Safeguarding Team Register is updated before publication and whenever a safeguarding role-holder changes. A change of role-holder does not require amendment of the full policy where the safeguarding responsibilities and procedures remain unchanged.

## 9. Managing Referrals and External Reporting

Any member of staff who is concerned about a child must inform the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay. If the child is at immediate risk of harm, emergency action must be taken in line with UAE law, school procedure and the direction of the relevant authority.

The DSL will decide whether the concern should be managed internally with support, escalated to school leadership, referred externally, or reported to the relevant authority. Depending on the nature and urgency of the concern, this may include KHDA, the Ministry of Education Child Protection Unit, Dubai Police, Community Development Authority, Dubai Health Authority, the Child Protection Centre or another competent authority.

The school will not delay safeguarding action while seeking internal approval where immediate protection is required.

### 9.1 Reporting Channels

- Internal safeguarding concerns: report immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL using the safeguarding concern form.
- Safeguarding concerns should be submitted via the school's safeguarding concern form and/or safeguarding email address (safeguarding@igniteschool.ae), as communicated to staff annually. The email address automatically forwards to DSLs.
- Immediate danger or emergency: contact Dubai Police / emergency services as appropriate and inform the DSL as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Child protection reporting: the Ministry of Education Child Protection Unit hotline is 80085. The DSL will use appropriate official reporting channels where required.
- KHDA matters: the DSL, Director or Board will communicate with KHDA where a regulatory notification, advice or escalation is required.
- Staff conduct and deregistration matters: where a safeguarding concern involves staff conduct and an investigation is initiated, school leadership and the Board will follow school procedures and KHDA requirements.

### 9.2 Referral Principles

- The child's immediate safety is the priority.
- Concerns must be recorded factually and securely.
- Only those who need to know should be informed.
- Parents are usually informed unless doing so may increase risk, cause delay, compromise evidence or interfere with a competent authority process.
- The DSL will ensure follow-up action, monitoring and case review are recorded.

## 10. Training and Safeguarding Competence

All school staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on an annual basis, updated regularly so they understand their role in recognising indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation or welfare concern, and following the required reporting procedures.

All staff members will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates through appropriate channels such as induction, email, staff briefings, e-bulletins, staff meetings and refresher training, at least annually and whenever required by risk or regulatory change.

Teachers and school leaders must complete required induction and mandatory professional development before assuming teaching duties, including relevant Code of Conduct, safety and risk management, child protection and safeguarding, student wellbeing, and working with Students of Determination training as required by KHDA guidance.

Contractors and external providers with regular or unsupervised access to students must undergo appropriate screening, vetting and safeguarding induction before commencing work.

Group	Required safeguarding training / briefing	Frequency / validity	Evidence retained
All employees	Safeguarding induction; Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; reporting procedure; DSL contacts; UAE/KHDA safeguarding expectations	On joining and annual refresher	Signed acknowledgement; attendance log; completion record
Teachers and leaders with teaching responsibilities	KHDA-aligned mandatory induction including Code of Conduct, safety/risk management, child protection, safeguarding, student wellbeing and Students of Determination training	Before assuming teaching duties and as required	Certificates / completion logs / HR matrix
Temporary staff, volunteers and contractors	Role-appropriate safeguarding briefing, professional boundaries and reporting procedure	Before working with or around students	Briefing log / acknowledgement
DSL and Deputy DSL team [SLT]	Formal DSL Level 3 or equivalent safeguarding lead training	At least every two years, with annual refreshers	Certificate; training matrix; Board assurance

Group	Required safeguarding training / briefing	Frequency / validity	Evidence retained
Middle leaders, counsellors, clinic, inclusion and selected staff	Advanced safeguarding / Level 2 or role-appropriate safeguarding training	Annually or as required by school risk	Certificate / completion evidence
Board of Trustees / DST	Formal DSL Level 3 or equivalent safeguarding lead training	On appointment and periodic refresher	Board induction / training evidence

### 10.1 DSL Training Expectations

The DSL and Deputy DSL team should undergo formal training at least every two years. In addition, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed at least annually through safeguarding updates, professional reading, external training, DSL meetings or briefings on current safeguarding developments.

- Understand early identification, intervention and referral processes in the Dubai school context.
- Maintain a working knowledge of relevant UAE child protection requirements and KHDA expectations.
- Ensure that every member of staff has access to and understands the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new, temporary and part-time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of Students of Determination, vulnerable students, students with communication barriers and students requiring counselling, inclusion or medical support.
- Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns, decisions, referrals and outcomes.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

## 11. Education, Student Voice and Online Safety

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and school leadership will ensure the school's safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately. Safeguarding education will be age-appropriate and embedded through pastoral care, wellbeing, digital safety, behaviour expectations, assemblies, counselling support and curriculum opportunities.

- Students will be taught how to seek help, how to report concerns and how to identify trusted adults in school.
- Students will receive age-appropriate education on bullying, cyberbullying, online safety, healthy relationships, emotional wellbeing, responsible communication and personal safety.
- The school will maintain safe and monitored digital systems, including appropriate filtering, supervision and response to concerns arising online.
- Online safety arrangements will take account of UAE child digital safety expectations, including protection from harmful digital content, age-inappropriate access, misuse of digital platforms, unsafe communication, child privacy risks, online exploitation and any digital matter requiring safeguarding escalation.
- Staff must not use personal social media, personal messaging platforms or personal accounts to communicate with students, except where expressly authorised by the school for a legitimate safeguarding or educational purpose and in line with school procedures.
- Use of technology, including artificial intelligence, must be legal, ethical, transparent, appropriate and must not replace professional judgement in student safeguarding, wellbeing or disciplinary matters.
- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be available publicly and parents will be made aware that referrals about suspected abuse, neglect or risk may be made where required.

## 12. Governance - Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees (BoT) provides strategic oversight of safeguarding and child protection, ensuring that effective policies, procedures, leadership, training and monitoring arrangements are in place to protect students' welfare, safety and well-being, and to fulfil all statutory and regulatory requirements.

The responsibilities of the BoT include:

- Ensuring that an effective safeguarding policy is in place, together with a staff behaviour policy / Staff Code of Conduct.
- Ensuring staff are provided with UAE/KHDA-aligned child protection guidelines and are aware of specific safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regard to child protection and safeguarding.
- Ensuring appropriate senior leaders have been appointed to act as the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Ensuring that all Designated Safeguarding Leads undergo formal child protection training every two years and receive regular annual safeguarding refreshers, for example through e-bulletins, meetings with other DSLs, safeguarding briefings, or time allocated to read and digest safeguarding developments.
- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding in an age-appropriate way.
- Ensuring the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.
- Reviewing safeguarding incident trends, referrals and outcomes, and receiving assurance that concerns are managed appropriately.
- Reviewing and approving safeguarding and child protection policies annually.
- Having a BoT Designated Safeguarding Trustee for safeguarding arrangements.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee provides independent oversight of the Board's safeguarding responsibilities by reviewing, on an annual basis, whether Ignite School has completed the required safeguarding actions. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee provides an annual assurance report to the Board of Trustees indicating whether the Board has fulfilled the safeguarding responsibilities outlined in this policy.

Board of Trustees process annual cycle:

1. Designated Safeguarding Trustee completes the DST Assurance Report.
2. Director / DSL provides supporting evidence.
3. Designated Safeguarding Trustee presents the report to the Board of Trustees.
4. The Board minutes the safeguarding discussion.
5. The Board records any actions arising in the minutes and the Designated Safeguarding Trustee records these actions on the report.
6. Actions are tracked through the next governance cycle.

Appendix F contains the DST Assurance Report template to support annual safeguarding governance oversight and evidence-based Board assurance.

### 13. Early Identification and Support

All staff should be aware of the process for early identification and support, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information appropriately and reporting concerns to the DSL. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

Staff should be particularly alert to students who may be vulnerable because of:

- Disability, additional learning needs or Student of Determination status.
- Communication barriers, language barriers or social isolation.
- Poor attendance, frequent lateness, repeated unexplained absence or sudden attendance changes.
- Signs of emotional distress, self-harm, anxiety, withdrawal or behaviour change.
- Bullying, peer conflict, online harm, exploitation or unsafe relationships.
- Family circumstances that may present safeguarding challenges.
- Medical, mental health, social care, financial or environmental vulnerabilities.

Staff must monitor the situation and report ongoing or escalating concerns to the DSL so that appropriate action, support, escalation or referral can be considered.

### 14. Students of Determination

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for Students of Determination and students with additional needs. Staff must not assume that indicators of possible abuse, neglect or emotional distress relate only to a student's disability, communication need, behaviour or diagnosis.

- Possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood, injury, regression or withdrawal must be explored and reported appropriately.
- Communication barriers and difficulties may affect disclosure and reporting.
- Students may be more vulnerable where they depend on a wider network of adults for personal care, transport, supervision, therapy or support.
- Bullying, peer abuse, online abuse and emotional harm may affect Students of Determination without obvious outward signs.
- Staff must protect student voice, dignity, privacy, participation and reasonable accommodation while applying safeguarding procedures.
- The Inclusion Team will work with the DSL where safeguarding concerns intersect with individual education plans, risk assessments, behaviour support plans or external specialist support.

### 15. Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse must never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", friendship conflict or normal developmental behaviour.

When considering whether behaviour is abusive, staff and leaders should consider whether there is a difference in power, age, size, ability, status or development; whether behaviour is repeated; whether there is coercion, intimidation, humiliation or exploitation; and whether there are concerns about the intention or impact of the behaviour.

Peer-on-peer abuse may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, harmful relationship behaviour, gender-based abuse, harassment, intimidation, online abuse, exploitation, image-based harm, coercion or other harmful behaviour.

To minimise risk, the school will:

- Provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum that supports students to understand acceptable behaviour and personal safety.
- Maintain systems for students to raise concerns with staff and be listened to, believed and supported.
- Develop risk assessments, safety plans and support plans where appropriate.
- Apply behaviour, anti-bullying, wellbeing, inclusion and safeguarding procedures consistently.
- Support both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator in a manner that prioritises safety, fairness, supervision, intervention and appropriate record-keeping.

## 16. Dealing With a Disclosure

When a child makes a disclosure, staff must respond calmly, listen carefully and report the concern without delay. Staff must not investigate, ask leading questions, promise confidentiality or delay reporting.

Staff must:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said and allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises that cannot be kept.
- Never promise a child that the information will be kept secret.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Ask only open questions where necessary to clarify immediate safety, such as “Tell me what happened.”
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator, make assumptions or share personal views.
- Explain what has to be done next and who may need to be told.
- Make a written record as soon as possible using the child’s own words where possible.
- Pass the information to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

## 17. Record Keeping, Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions must be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss the matter with the DSL.

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation, observation or incident.
- Use the school safeguarding concern form wherever possible.
- Record the date, time, place, persons present, noticeable non-verbal behaviour, exact words used where possible, and factual observations.
- Draw a diagram or complete a body marking form where there are visible injuries, marks or physical indicators.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations, assumptions or opinions.
- Retain original notes where they may be needed by the school, KHDA or a competent authority.
- Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with applicable UAE legal requirements and school records management procedures.
- Store records securely, separately from general student files where appropriate, with access limited to those with a safeguarding need to know.

Confidentiality must be maintained in accordance with UAE law, child protection expectations and school procedures. Safeguarding information must never be discussed casually or shared with persons who do not have a legitimate need to know.

Where a student who is or has been the subject of a safeguarding concern transfers to another school, the DSL will manage the secure transfer of appropriate safeguarding information to the receiving school where required and appropriate, in line with applicable KHDA rules and data protection expectations.

## 18. School Procedures, Supervision, Trips and Events

Ignite School will maintain operational procedures that support safeguarding in all school contexts, including classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, bathrooms, clinics, buses, activities, distance learning, trips, events and external provider activities.

- Students must be supervised in accordance with school duty, trip, transport, clinic, activity and event procedures.
- School trips and events must include risk assessment, appropriate staffing ratios, consent processes, emergency contacts, medical information, transport checks and safeguarding arrangements.
- External providers and contractors must be briefed on safeguarding expectations, conduct, emergency procedures and reporting routes before working with or around students.
- Any incident involving physical injury, concerning behaviour, alleged abuse, bullying, online harm, unsafe conduct or breach of supervision must be recorded and reported according to the applicable school procedure.
- School leaders must consider safeguarding implications when approving events, activities, photographs, media, visitor access, external speakers, transportation and off-site learning.

## 19. Communicating With Parents

Ignite School will ensure the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, including through the school website and appropriate parent communication channels.

Parents should usually be informed before a referral is made, unless informing parents may place the child at increased risk of harm, cause unreasonable delay, lead to the loss of evidence, compromise an investigation, or place another person at risk.

- A parental or adult response may place the child at greater risk, such as pressure, threats, silence, withdrawal or further abuse.
- There may be an unreasonable delay in securing protection or support.
- There may be a risk of loss of evidential material.
- A member of staff, another child or another person may be placed at risk.

The school will ensure that parents understand the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children. The school will seek to work in partnership with parents wherever this is safe, appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

## 20. Allegations Involving School Staff, Volunteers, Contractors or Leaders

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff, volunteer, contractor, outsourced worker, visitor, trustee, leader or adult associated with the school may have behaved in a way that has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.

This applies to any child the adult has contact with in their personal, professional or community life, where the information may affect the adult's suitability to work with or around children.

### 20.1 Concerns About Safeguarding Practice

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Whistleblowing and reporting procedures must be reflected in staff training and staff behaviour expectations.
- If staff have concerns about another staff member, they should report this to the Principal, Director or DSL as appropriate.
- Where there are concerns about a Principal, this should be referred to the Director and/or Board Designated Safeguarding Trustee as appropriate.
- Where there are concerns about the Director, this should be referred to the Board Designated Safeguarding Trustee or appropriate Board representative, and to the relevant authority where required.

### 20.2 Immediate Handling of Allegations

The person to whom an allegation is first reported must take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. They must not investigate, ask leading questions or make assumptions. Confidentiality must not be promised. The concern should be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

- Make an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words, including time, date, place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present.
- Sign and date the record and pass it immediately to the Director, Principal, DSL or Board Designated Safeguarding Trustee as appropriate.
- Where immediate safeguarding action is required, prioritise the child's safety and follow emergency reporting procedures.
- Do not alert the alleged adult or any other person where doing so may place the child at risk or compromise a safeguarding process.

### 20.3 Investigation, Disciplinary and KHDA Requirements

Safeguarding and child protection action must be prioritised before any employment or disciplinary response. Where a safeguarding concern involving staff conduct requires investigation, the school will follow its relevant safeguarding, disciplinary and HR procedures in line with KHDA requirements and UAE law.

- The Board, school Director, and school leadership will ensure allegations are handled promptly, fairly, confidentially and with appropriate safeguarding oversight.
- Where KHDA directs or requests an investigation, the school will conduct it promptly and thoroughly and will report the outcome in accordance with KHDA's specified timeframe or the school's own policy timeline, whichever is shorter.
- Where a staff misconduct investigation is initiated in relation to conduct that may lead to dismissal or deregistration, the Board and school leadership will follow applicable KHDA deregistration requirements.
- The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity. Failure to report concerns in accordance with school procedures may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- Where the allegation concerns the Director, the Board Designated Safeguarding Trustee shall assume oversight of the safeguarding response and determine whether external reporting is required.

## 21. Definitions and Signs of Abuse or Neglect

Harm means ill-treatment or impairment of health or development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Development includes physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development. Health includes physical and mental health.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, institutional, school, online or community setting by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or by another child or children.

### 21.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, inappropriate restraint or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

- Possible indicators include unexplained or repeated bruises, bite marks, burns, scalds, fractures, untreated injuries, conflicting explanations, injuries on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely, withdrawal from physical contact, aggression, emotional or behaviour concerns, or frequent absence from school.

## 21.2 Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Sexual abuse and exploitation involve forcing, enticing, grooming or exploiting a child or young person to take part in sexual or immoral activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening. It may include contact and non-contact activities, online grooming, exposure to inappropriate images, exploitation, or encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways.

- Possible indicators include self-harm, eating disorders, running away, reluctance to undress for PE, inappropriate sexualised behaviour or knowledge, withdrawal, sudden changes in school work or behaviour, pain, bleeding, bruising or itching in the genital or anal area, or signs of grooming or exploitation.

## 21.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment that causes or may cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, silencing them, making fun of them, imposing age-inappropriate expectations, serious bullying including cyberbullying, or exposing them to domestic abuse or ill-treatment of another.

- Possible indicators include low self-esteem, withdrawal, social isolation, depression, self-harm, developmental delay, extreme passivity or aggression, compulsive behaviour, attention-seeking behaviour, abnormal attachment patterns or fearfulness.

## 21.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, protection from danger, medical care, emotional support or education.

- Possible indicators include poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, untreated medical problems, constant tiredness, poor attendance, failure to thrive, hunger, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour, poor socialisation or disturbed peer relationships.

## 21.5 Bullying, Online Harm and Exploitation

Bullying, online harm and exploitation may involve repeated aggressive behaviour, imbalance of power, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, cyberbullying, image-based abuse, grooming, manipulation, threats, blackmail or use of technology to harm a child.

- Possible indicators include reluctance to attend school, sudden withdrawal from friends or devices, emotional distress after online activity, unexplained gifts or money, secrecy, fearfulness, unexplained absence, declining performance, or reports from peers.

## 21.6 Family or Environmental Indicators

Family or environmental indicators may include domestic violence, mental health difficulties, alcohol or drug misuse, dangerous or hazardous home conditions, isolation, lack of support, previous history of abuse, unexplained injuries or deaths in the family, or behaviour by adults that increases risk to children.

## 22. Appendices

### Appendix A - Safeguarding Team and Reporting Contact Register

The live Safeguarding Team and Reporting Contact Register will be maintained by the DSL and HR and circulated to staff at induction and whenever updated.

Safeguarding role	Name / role	Main responsibility	Contact / evidence location
Lead DSL	Wedad Saada - Director	Strategic safeguarding leadership and external escalation	Live DSL register
Deputy DSL	Colin Donovan - Pre-KG/ES Principal	Phase safeguarding and case review	Live DSL register
Deputy DSL	Asif Padela - MS/HS Principal	Phase safeguarding and case review	Live DSL register
Board DST	Board-appointed trustee	Governance oversight and assurance	Board minutes
HR evidence owner	HR Office	Training, induction and acknowledgement records	HR safeguarding compliance folder
External reporting	MoE Child Protection Unit hotline 80085; KHDA / competent authorities as applicable	External reporting and regulatory communication	DSL records

### Appendix B - Safeguarding Concern / Child Protection Report Form

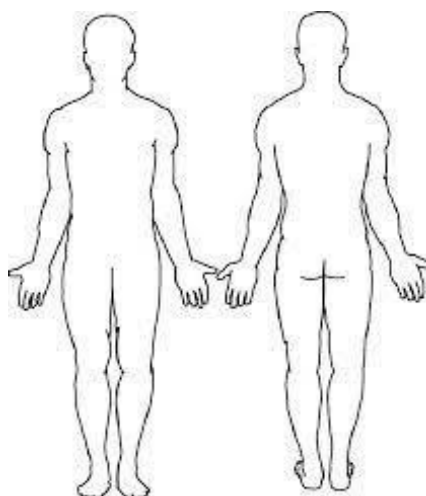
This form should be completed factually and submitted to the DSL. External submission must be made by the DSL or authorised school leader unless immediate emergency reporting is required.

Safeguarding concerns should be submitted via the school's safeguarding concern form and/or safeguarding email address (safeguarding@igniteschool.ae), as communicated to staff annually.

<b>Student full name</b>	
<b>Grade / section</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Parent / guardian names</b>	
<b>Parent / guardian mobile numbers</b>	
<b>Home address</b>	
<b>Reporter full name and role</b>	
<b>Date and time of concern</b>	
<b>Summary of concern using factual words</b>	
<b>Immediate action taken</b>	
<b>DSL review / next steps</b>	

### Appendix C - Body Marking / Injury Record Form

This form must be completed by an appropriate staff member where physical marks or injuries are observed or disclosed. Do not ask the child to remove clothing beyond what is appropriate, necessary and in line with safeguarding, dignity and privacy requirements.



<b>Student name</b>	
<b>Date and time observed</b>	
<b>Observed by</b>	
<b>Location of mark / injury</b>	
<b>Description of mark / injury</b>	
<b>Student explanation in own words</b>	

<b>Student name</b>	
<b>Action taken / referred to DSL</b>	
<b>DSL review / next steps</b>	

### Appendix D - Staff Declaration of Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Ignite School - Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return to the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Human Resources by: \_\_\_\_\_.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that I have read and understood the Ignite School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and my role and responsibilities in safeguarding children.

I confirm that I have received or been provided access to the following documents and information:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Safeguarding reporting procedure and concern form.
- DSL and Deputy DSL names and contact details.
- UAE/KHDA-aligned safeguarding guidance and relevant school expectations.
- Safeguarding training and induction requirements relevant to my role.

I understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility and that I must report any concern without delay.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix E - Safeguarding Training Compliance Matrix

Name / role	Staff group	Training required	Due date	Completed date	Evidence / certificate location

## Appendix F - DST Assurance Report

Purpose: The DST Assurance Report provides structured annual safeguarding governance assurance to the Board of Trustees. It records whether Ignite School has implemented, monitored and evidenced the safeguarding responsibilities set out in this policy, without disclosing confidential personal case details unnecessarily.

Report period: \_\_\_\_\_ Designated Safeguarding Trustee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director / DSL evidence provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Board meeting date: \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Board of Trustees annual process	Evidence / completion note
1	Designated Safeguarding Trustee completes this report.	
2	Director / DSL provides supporting evidence.	
3	Designated Safeguarding Trustee presents the report to the Board of Trustees.	
4	Board minutes the safeguarding discussion.	
5	Board records any actions arising in the minutes and the Designated Safeguarding Trustee records these actions on this report.	
6	Actions are tracked through the next governance cycle.	

Annual assurance checklist:

Safeguarding responsibility	Evidence reviewed / assurance statement	Status	Action / owner / deadline
Effective safeguarding policy and staff behaviour policy / Staff Code of Conduct in place	Approved policy, Staff Code of Conduct, circulation evidence and annual review record reviewed.		
Staff provided with UAE/KHDA-aligned child protection guidance and safeguarding information	Induction materials, staff communications, DSL contacts and acknowledgement evidence reviewed.		
Staff induction in child protection and safeguarding completed	Induction records, attendance logs, staff acknowledgements and HR evidence folder reviewed.		
Appropriate senior leaders appointed as DSLs	Lead DSL, Deputy DSLs and safeguarding team structure confirmed, with roles and escalation routes reviewed.		
DSL training completed every two years and annual refresher maintained	DSL Level 3 certificates, refresher evidence, safeguarding updates and training matrix reviewed.		
Culture of safeguarding challenge and confidence to report concerns	Whistleblowing routes, reporting procedures, staff communication and leadership assurance reviewed.		
Children taught about safeguarding in an age-appropriate way	Curriculum, pastoral, wellbeing, online safety and student voice evidence reviewed.		
Appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place for online safety	IT filtering, monitoring, digital safety arrangements and online safeguarding response records reviewed.		
Safeguarding incident trends, referrals and outcomes reviewed	Anonymised trend information, referrals, outcomes and leadership follow-up reviewed.		
Safeguarding and child protection policies reviewed and approved annually	Board approval record, annual review schedule and policy update evidence reviewed.		
Safeguarding actions tracked through governance cycle	Board minutes, action tracker and closure evidence reviewed.		
KHDA / DSIB / accreditation safeguarding evidence maintained	Safeguarding evidence register and inspection readiness folder reviewed.		

Overall assurance outcome:

Key safeguarding strengths noted:

Key actions and deadlines:

DST signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Chair / Vice Chair acknowledgement: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G - Related Safeguarding Evidence Register

Evidence item	Minimum evidence retained	Owner	Review frequency
Policy approval	Signed approved policy	Director / Board	Annual
DSL register	Current names, roles, contacts and training status	DSL / HR	Termly and on change
Staff acknowledgement	Signed declaration for all staff	HR	On joining and annual

Evidence item	Minimum evidence retained	Owner	Review frequency
Training matrix	Completion records, certificates and gap actions	HR / DSL	Monthly during induction; termly thereafter
Safer recruitment	Police clearances, due diligence, good standing and appointment evidence	HR	Before appointment and audit
Concern records	Concern forms, DSL decisions, referrals and outcomes	DSL	Ongoing
Board assurance	DST reports, anonymised trends and action tracking	Board / DST	Annual
Online safety	Filtering/monitoring checks and incident responses	IT / DSL	Termly
Trips and events	Risk assessments, supervision plans, consent and emergency arrangements	Trip lead / SLT	Each trip/event











# Ignite School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - June 28 2026 v3


Final Audit Report

2026-06-28

Created:	2026-06-28
By:	Osama Ghaleb (hr-office@igniteschool.ae)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAGAJzC1i-iVgiX_ydMDEbLJxqQIQIFgMs

## "Ignite School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - June 28 2026 v3" History


-  Document created by Osama Ghaleb (hr-office@igniteschool.ae)  
2026-06-28 - 9:53:10 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to director@igniteschool.ae for signature  
2026-06-28 - 9:53:16 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to principal-kges@igniteschool.ae for signature  
2026-06-28 - 9:53:17 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to Asif Padela (principal-mshs@igniteschool.ae) for signature  
2026-06-28 - 9:53:17 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to j.kirwin@igniteschool.ae for signature  
2026-06-28 - 9:53:17 AM GMT
-  Email viewed by j.kirwin@igniteschool.ae  
2026-06-28 - 9:55:56 AM GMT
-  Signer j.kirwin@igniteschool.ae entered name at signing as Jason Kirwin  
2026-06-28 - 9:58:28 AM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Jason Kirwin (j.kirwin@igniteschool.ae)  
Signature Date: 2026-06-28 - 9:58:30 AM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: TYPE
-  Email viewed by director@igniteschool.ae  
2026-06-28 - 11:47:34 AM GMT
-  Signer director@igniteschool.ae entered name at signing as Wedad Saada  
2026-06-28 - 11:48:23 AM GMT

 Document e-signed by Wedad Saada (director@igniteschool.ae)

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 Document e-signed by Colin Donovan (principal-kges@igniteschool.ae)

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